

P. THE SCHOOL ROLE IN A DISASTER

**Commodity Food Assistance in a Disaster or
Situations of Distress**

Federal Regulations Governing Assistance

- 7 CFR Part 250.43
- Requirements for assistance in **situations of disaster.**

- 7 CFR Part 250.44
- Requirements for assistance in **situations of distress.**

Major roles and responsibilities of:

- Disaster Relief Organization (Red Cross)
- Distributing Agency (DA)
- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
- Southeast Regional Office (SERO)
- **Recipient Agencies (RA)**

Disaster Means:

- Any natural catastrophe, or regardless of cause, any fire, flood or explosion, in any part of the U.S., which the **President determines** causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance; and
- Any other occasion or instance in which the **President determines** Federal assistance is needed

Situation of Distress Means:

- A catastrophe **not** declared by the President to be a disaster, but which, in the judgement of the DA, warrants the use of USDA commodities for congregate feeding; and
- Any other situation **not** declared by the President to be a disaster, but which, in the judgement of FNS, warrants the use of USDA commodities for congregate feeding or household distribution.

Definitions

- Disaster organization means: any organization(s) authorized by appropriate Federal or State officials to assist disaster victims (**In Kentucky this is the Red Cross.**)
- Disaster victims means: persons who because of acts of God or manmade disasters, are in need of food assistance, whether or not they are victims of a major disaster or emergency.
- Needy Person means:
Persons provided service by charitable institutions, which, because of their economic status, are in need of food assistance.
- All the members of a household who are certified as in need of food assistance, and
- Disaster victims.

The Two Types of Feeding Operations

- Congregate Feeding usually takes place in: Shelter locations, Service Centers, and by Mobile Canteens.
- Household Distribution is **only** allowed when: Commercial channels of food distribution are disrupted; and justification can be provided.

Approval Authority/Disaster Congregate Meal Service

In a Disaster

- Relief Organization submits a request for food to the DA
- DA approves request
- DA determines the length of donation
- DA must notify the SERO within 24 hours of approval

Approval Authority/Situations of Distress for Congregate Feeding

In a Situation of Distress

- Relief Organization submits request
- DA approves applications
- DA approval not to exceed 30 days
- SERO must be notified within 24 hours of approval
- **DA forwards applications to SERO for submission to FNS HQ for prior approval**
- **FNS HQ determines the duration**

Approval Authority/Duration Household Distribution

In a Disaster

- DA determines that distribution is appropriate
- DA submits applications requesting approval for such donations to the SERO for submission to FNS HQ for prior approval
- FNS HQ determines the length of time such donations will be made

In a Situation of Distress(*)

- Same as Disaster
 - * Note: In instances in which food stamp benefits have been approved, additional record keeping is required and instructions will be provided at that time.

Application Process

- Submitted in writing if circumstances permits, or
- Confirmed in writing in a timely manner

Application for Congregate Meals Disaster Assistance*

- Number of people requiring meals;
 - Quantity and type of food needed for congregate meal service; and
 - Period of time for which commodities are requested.
- Similar for Situation in Distress

Application for Congregate Meals Disaster Assistance

In addition, organizations must report:

- The number and location of sites providing congregate meal service as such sites are established
- Information must be reported to the SERO by the DA within 24 hours of approval.

Application for Household Distribution Disaster Assistance

(Similar to Situation in Distress)

- Description of disaster situation,
- Identification of the specific area(s) included in the request
- Number of households affected:
- Explanation as to why the distribution of commodities to households is warranted;
- Anticipated distribution periods:
- Method(s) of distribution available

- Quantity and type of food needed for distribution;
- Statement of assurance that simultaneous disaster food stamp benefits and commodity assistance will not be provided to individual households; and
- Description of the system that will be implemented to prevent dual participation.
- In addition, information on the number and locations of sites be provided to the DA as such sites are established.

Note: Applications submitted to SERO by the DA for submission to FNS-HQ for prior approval.

Responsibilities: Disaster Relief Organization

- Make an assessment whether mass feeding is needed
- Make application to the DA
- Request commodity assistance from the DA food on caseload factor
- Maintain complete records
- Report daily to the DA certifying the amount of USDA food products used for disaster relief and the number of victims served.
- Return all unused product

FNS Responsibilities in a Disaster

- Communicate with the DA and the emergency relief agencies
- Identify food needs
- Coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) team.

Secure needed food:

- Re-donations from another DA's inventory
 - From Federal Inventory
 - Emergency Procurement
- Alternative Sources:
- Governmental Service Agencies (GSC)
 - Department of Defense
 - Arrange for transportation of donated food
 - Maintain accurate records of the types and quantities of donated foods used and the program they were taken from.

DA Responsibilities:

- Maintain information on inventories at all levels
- Ensure that donated foods are used only for authorized purpose

- Ensure that organizations are aware of their responsibilities

Following approval of FNS, DA may release USDA donated foods to eligible disaster relief agencies from:

- State inventories (foods on hand in commercial distributors warehouses)
- Stocks maintained in schools
- Other recipient agencies
- Keep careful records
- Maintain close contact with FNS
- Report the use of commodities to FNS within 24 hours
- Reconcile commodities with the funding used for their purchase

Replacement of Commodities

Disaster

- DA requests replacement in writing to SERO within 30 days following termination of assistance FNS will replace such foods if request is made within 30 days

Situation of Distress

- DA requests replacement in writing to SERO within 30 days following termination of assistance **FNS will replace such foods to the extent that foods are available.**

DA Responsibilities

- Within 45 days following termination of the disaster assistance, DA must provide a summary report to FNS

RA Responsibilities:

- Contact the DA as soon as possible after Situation in Distress occurs.
- Assist Disaster Relief Organization in obtaining staff and completing the food request form if requested,
- Contact the DA (Disaster Relief Coordinator) daily with status report by shelter location, meals served daily and commodities used.
- Keep careful records using the Emergency Feeding Report form, (KY-FD-50)
- Maintain close contact with DA Disaster Relief Coordinator,
- Reconcile commodities with the funding used for their purchase and immediately upon close of all shelters and feeding the RA must submit the completed Emergency Feeding Report form, (KY-FD-50) to the DA

Disaster Relief Coordinator. Failure to forward this information in a timely manner may result in failure to receive replacement of commodity foods used.

- Providing non-USDA donated food for disaster relief is a matter between the recipient agency and the disaster relief organization. These transactions are to be kept separately from the USDA donated food used and are not to be reported to the DA. Any payments or fees involved are a matter between the recipient agency and the disaster relief organization.
- If the RA provides processed commodity foods to the disaster relief organization(s), these transactions are to be handled just as non-USDA foods. The recipient agency shall assign a value to these commodities based on replacement costs of like items.